



# **The Day on Fire: A Novel Suggested by the Life of Arthur Rimbaud (Valancourt 20th Century Classics)**

*James Ramsey Ullman*

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By the age of fifteen, Arthur Rimbaud was already one of the most brilliant poets of his time. And for the next four years - and four only - Rimbaud (the Claude Morel of this book) was simultaneously a writer of genius, a visionary idealist, and a deliberate wallower in gutters of depravity perhaps unmatched in all of human experience. But at the age of nineteen, he was through forever with both writing and debauchery, and at this point, he all but vanished, spending most of his remaining years as a vagabond wanderer through Europe and Africa.

In the epic *The Day on Fire* (1958), a masterwork of biographical fiction, James Ramsey Ullman retraces the steps of Rimbaud's life from his rebellious youth in a dull provincial town to his teenage years as a homosexual, drunkard and drug addict in Paris, and his later years, wandering the desert in search of some elusive beauty or truth. As Ullman writes in his Foreword, "The truth, the inward core, of Rimbaud's life, is a truth for all times, as long as each of us, all of us, have our nights alone and our days on fire, our seasons in hell and our hope of heaven."

"It comes close to being the best book we've ever read." - *Victoria Advocate*

"A literary masterpiece ... One of the most forceful novels of our decade." - *Montreal Gazette*

"A haunting tale with an obsessive fascination." - *Kirkus Reviews*

"Shocking ... Ullman has succeeded in making believable a life whose terms would be considered absolutely unbelievable if we did not know that they were true." - *Chicago Tribune*

"Engrossing ... a tragic life dramatically, poetically and compellingly visualized." - *Booklist*

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